

Message Text

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COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 12413

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: INDICTMENT OF TANAKA

REF: TOKYO 12161

SUMMARY. FORMER PRIMIN TANAKA WAS INDICTED ON CHARGES OF BRIBERY AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE LAW VIOLATION ON AUGUST 16. PROSECUTORS ARE NOW GATHERING EVIDENCE ON SIX LDP OFFICIALS ALSO SUSPECTED OF TAKING LOCKHEED BRIBES. INDICTMENT CAUSED LITTLE SURPRISE, BUT IT HAS CREATED MODEST ADDITIONAL OBSTACLE FOR MIKI CHALLENGERS AND MAY HAVE REDUCED TANAKA AS OPPOSITION PARTY TARGET IN UPCOMING ELECTION CAMPAIGN. END SUMMARY.

1. FORMER PRIMIN TANAKA WAS INDICTED AUGUST 16 ON CHARGES OF BRIBERY AND VIOLATION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONTROL LAWS. BRIBERY CHARGE SPECIFIES MALFEASANCE IN OFFICE AND CARRIES MAXIMUM PENALTY OF FIVE YEARS IN PRISON. TANAKA ALLEGEDLY TOOK 1.7 MILLION DOLLARS FROM MARUBENI CORPORATION BETWEEN AUGUST 1972 AND MARCH 1974 IN EXCHANGE FOR ARRANGING GOJ APPROVAL OF THE PURCHASE OF LOCKHEED TRI-STAR AIRBUSES BY
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ALL NIPPON AIRWAYS (ANA). AMOUNT OF BRIBE WAS LARGEST A

JAPANESE POLITICIAN HAS EVER BEEN ACCUSED OF TAKING AND TANAKA IS ONLY JAPANESE PRIMIN EVER INDICTED FOR A CRIME COMMITTED WHILE PRIMIN. (FORMER PRIMIN ASHIDA, INDICTED FOR BRIBERY IN 1948, WAS CHARGED WITH OFFENSES COMMITTED WHILE FONMIN.) TOKYO DISTRICT PROSECUTORS OBTAINED INDICTMENT JUST AS PERIOD DURING WHICH THEY WERE LEGALLY ABLE TO DETAIN TANAKA FOR QUESTIONING WAS RUNNING OUT. FOLLOWING INDICTMENT, TANAKA WAS RELEASED ON BAIL AUGUST 17.

2. PROSECUTORS ALSO INDICTED THREE MARUBENI EXECUTIVES (FORMER CHAIRMAN HIRO HIYAMA, AND FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS TOSHIHARU OKUBO AND HIROSHI ITOH) ON CHARGES OF GIVING BRIBES TO TANAKA. ALL HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN INDICTED ON CHARGES OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE LAW VIOLATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH "PEANUTS" AND "PIECES" RECEIPTS THEY ISSUED TO LOCKHEED.

3. IN ANNOUNCING INDICTMENTS, CHIEF PROSECUTOR TAKASE SAID MAIN FOCUS OF LOCKHEED INVESTIGATIONS WOULD NOW MOVE FROM "MARUBENI ROUTE" TO "ANA ROUTE." HE SAID PROSECUTORS WERE GATHERING EVIDENCE ON SIX OFFICIALS (REFTEL) SUSPECTED OF RECEIVING LOCKHEED MONEY FROM ANA. TAKASE ADDED PROSECUTORS FOR MOMENT WOULD NOT CONCENTRATE ON LARGER AND MORE DIFFICULT "KODAMA ROUTE" (CHANNEL FOR ABOUT SEVEN MILLION DOLLARS OF LOCKHEED'S TWELVE MILLION DOLLARS IN PAYOFFS). THIS STATEMENT DREW CRITICISM FROM BOTH ASAHI SHIMBUN AND A SOCIALIST SPOKESMAN. BOTH SAID THAT SINCE AILING "FIXER" KODAMA WAS OBVIOUSLY DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE SCANDAL, "CLARIFICATION" OF HIS ROLE WAS A NECESSITY. (KODAMA'S SECRETARY HAS BEEN ARRESTED ON BOTH STOCK MANIPULATION AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE CHARGES; FURTHER, MOST RUMORS OF ALLEGED LDP SEC GEN NAKASONE'S INVOLVEMENT IN LOCKHEED TIE HIM TO THE "KODAMA ROUTE.")

4. COMMENT. THE TANAKA INDICTMENT CAME AS NO SURPRISE, PROSECUTORS HAVING FREELY LEAKED THEIR INTENTIONS TO THE PRESS FOR DAYS. WHILE HIS RELEASE ON BAIL MAY ENABLE HIM TO BOLSTER MORALE IN HIS DISPIRITED FACTION, WE SEE NO ACTIVE ROLE FOR HIM IN PRESENT OUST-MIKI MOVEMENT. FOR ONE THING, FUKUDA AND OHIRA WOULD NOT WANT HIM. EXTENSIVE CONFIDENTIAL

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PUBLICITY SURROUNDING TANAKA INDICTMENT HAS CREATED, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY, A CLIMATE OF OPINION IN WHICH IT WILL BE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR MIKI'S CHALLENGERS TO PRESENT A PLAUSIBLE REASON FOR DEPOSING HIM. MOREOVER, INDICTMENT MAY SERVE TO LIMIT DAMAGE TO LDP IN COMING GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN: HAD ARREST NOT BEEN FOLLOWED WITH INDICTMENT, OPPOSITION PARTIES WOULD HAVE HAD EVEN JUICIER TARGET. SHOESMITH

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